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Talking Points on Rwanda for Telcon with FM Juppe

- Rwanda and the international community owe a deep debt of gratitude to France. Your humanitarian effort has saved thousands of lives and reassured Rwandans in the safe zone.
- We understand, however, that Rwandans have begun leaving the zone for Bukavu in Zaire, in anticipation of the planned withdrawal of your forces. The outflow could match or exceed the unprecedented outflow to Goma last month.
- The international community must do everything possible to avoid another humanitarian catastrophe. In order to reassure the population in the safe zone, we believe that there must be a smooth transition from Operation Turquoise to UNAMIR protection in the zone.
- We are doing everything we can to assist the UN in rapidly deploying UNAMIR and pushed hard to have the Ethiopians deploy as quickly as possible. However, UNAMIR troops are not yet ready to assume protection in the safe zone and do not yet have the full confidence of Rwandans in the zone.
- We urge you to consider extending the French presence long enough to assure a smooth transition to UNAMIR and provide reassurance to Rwandans in the safe zone.
- We have urged the Rwandan government to cooperate with you to avoid a humanitarian disaster and, if necessary, to allow French forces to stay on beyond August 22 to achieve this goal. President Bizimungu and Vice President Kagame assured us they were willing to be flexible and work with your government on this problem.
- However, the Rwandan government still has concerns about Operation Turquoise. If they can be persuaded that your continued presence is beneficial, as we firmly believe, they have indicated that the timing of your withdrawal would not pose a problem.
- We understand Kagame has already informed UN SGSR Khan that the government does not object to your troops remaining for a short additional period. We believe this should satisfy your concern about obtaining Rwandan government approval.
- We understand you are sending diplomatic representatives to Kigali. We welcome this move and urge your representatives to discuss the Rwandan government's willingness to allow an extension in your deployment and work out necessary details.
- We will work with you in the Security Council to take action to extend the mandate for Operation Turquoise and are already working on a draft resolution.
- We urge you to continue efforts to reassure the population in the safe zone, through positive messages and visits into the zone by Rwandan government officials.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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